

## The Sketch of Age in Shakespeare's Henry IV (Parts 1 and 2)

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Received: 15/02/2020

Accepted: 18/05/2020

Published: 20/05/2020

Volume: 1 Issue: 1

How to cite this paper: Sarkar, K.D. (2020). The Sketch of Age in Shakespeare's Henry IV (Parts 1 and 2). *Journal of Critical Studies in Language and Literature*, 1(1), 9-21  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.2525/jcsll.v.1n.1.2020 P.9>

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### Abstract

As there is birth, everything including human being is certain of the journey of being aged but the society and its various institutions became dogmatic at the time of approaching an aged man focusing on their norms and culture. On the other hand, there is no universal definition or margin of calling a person aged. Despite the people in the society, however knowledgeable and gifted they are, keep on pursuing the social norm and cannot think over it. Shakespeare is also one of them who consider the age as the society sees. But, being an undisputed and world class writer, this approach cannot be expected from Shakespeare. And so, this paper investigates Shakespeare's attitude towards age and aged people in comparison to the young in the both parts of the drama, *Henry IV*. For this investigation, the text with all its annotations and critics' comments are analysed minutely from a gerontological point of view. This study also examines the concept of aging in some other works of Shakespeare.

**Keywords:** Ageism, Gerontology, Young, Colour, Shakespeare

### 1. Introduction

In *Henry IV* (Parts 1 and 2), a historical play, Shakespeare is supposed to have less exercise of his liberty though he has tried to make his play palatable to audience with his special touch to a few characters who significantly demonstrate the concept of Shakespeare in regard to old age and aged people. Besides, a reminiscence of the social and critical view attempted by various critics in regard to age can put a light to clear the concept and point to Shakespeare as someone who is intransigent to the view of age in this drama. One of those characters is King Henry IV and in depicting that one, Shakespeare's urge to see the youth replacing aged King is found again. However, critic's and audience's one of the most loved character, Sir John Falstaff, is presented in a complex way who is inter-twisted by youth spirit and old, fat body having a rebellious warmth against the societal ideology of agedness. But, the young character, Hotspur, is exhibited as being an immature one with full of passion of kingship and wining battle signifying the temperament of young souls. In contrast to Hotspur, Prince of Wales, Hal, is bestowed with all colours of youth enjoyed at the first stage of drama though his expressive change of himself brings forth a lot of inquisitions in the mind of not only the characters but also the audience and critics. However, age can be found a theme of discrimination in most of the works of Shakespeare. Thus, even in a historical play like *Henry IV*, Shakespeare induces his very theory of age clarifying the objective of this paper that is to show the reality of Shakespeare's biased presentation of age.

## 2. Literature Review

Elizabethan and Jacobean period have been aware of the discrepancy between the love and devotion of children and old or older people. The charitable organizations are found to have a good look at the old parents. Neither appearances nor physical and mental conditions imply necessarily that the person is old. Ageing has been as much a process in those periods as it is at present. In this regard, Joel T. Rosenthal says:

...the actual presence of aged man and woman was encountered at virtually all social levels and in all social settings. The response of their world to their existence and their role ranged from contempt and impatient to charity, retirement provisions and pensions, veneration and respect, and sometimes even an acceptance that the turnover of power in patriarchal society was a measured march whereby generation eventually succeeded generation. (Rosenthal, 430-432)

Margery Kempe, the late medieval English mystic, presents astonishing details into her private life where she discusses her relationship with her old husband. She says:

Then she took her husband home with her and looked after him for years afterwards, as long as he lived. She had much trouble with him, for his last days he turned childish and lacked reason, so that he could not go to a stool to relieve himself, or else he would not, but like a child discharged his excrement into his linen clothes as he sat there by the fire or at the table- wherever it was, he would spare no place. And therefore her labour was all greater, in washing and wriggling, and so were her expenses for keeping the fire going. All this hindered her a very great deal from her contemplation, so that many times she would have disliked her work, except that she thought to herself how she in her young days had had many delectable thoughts, physical lust, and inordinate love for his body. And therefore she was glad to be punished by means of the same body, and took it much the more easily, and served him and helped him, she thought, as she would have done Christ himself. (Kempe 221)

Here, Kemp's attempt to find innovative way to join with Christ, being told by Him to take care of her husband as a proxy, is the demonstration of the relationship between old husband and wife in those periods. Apart from the spiritual dimensions, here, there is an excellent picture of social reality, treating one's husband on old age. Again, it is also found that the younger generations tend to claim most wealth for themselves to the detriment of old parents and relatives, though it may be assumed that the old are well off and enjoying pleasant life. T. Rosenthal makes a pertinent comment when he studies the possibility of retirement of the old in the 15th century England. He says:

To the medieval self-consciousness childhood, adolescence, and even old age were all familiar entities. All were recognized as occupying distinct segments of the life line. They were different from each other, and different from full adulthood. Each had its own dominion, characteristics and attributes. And for those who managed to survive to become the elderly, the 'elde' of poetic discourse there was even the possibility of retirement. Yes, retirement in the fifteenth century. (Rosenthal 174)

He also states:

Cultural dissonance took many forms. One was manifested in the self-dramatizing tendency to emphasize the early approach of old age. Many saw its frosty touch by age 30 or 35, few argued to postpone it until 50 or much beyond. This view, from the wrong end of telescope, was a commonplace through Europe, and it made individuals prone to have before us a clear case of a cultural model shaping identity, of art telling nature how to define itself. (Rosenthal 185)

In this period, it is found that the idea of old age is to die a good death both in the arms of Church, friends or family. On the other hand, marriage of old man with young woman is also found. These are the periods where a man still enjoying physical and mental health can go on as long as the health permits. Even the urban magistrates are often found to be in fifties and sixties. But, most of those reaching old age have encountered increasing medical problems which reduce them to poverty and force them to give up housekeeping. The loss of economic and political independence has been likely to bring a rapid attenuation of respect as well as status. Spinning and knitting, though poorly paid, have enabled a lot of aged women to keep working and earning to the very end of life. In contrast to that men with poor health have been unable to go through manual labour and consequently they have to see the worst side of life. Interestingly, a young man of that period generally prefers a young wife when the man is an established man but in an opposite situation, the young prefer the widow with wealth. Then a wealthy widow has been a desirable commodity. Besides, in 1572 the Vagabond Act of 1572 has been passed under Queen Elizabeth to provide justice of the peace to the aged, decayed, impotent and poor. Likewise, the Government of Bangladesh in 27 October, 2013 publishes a gadget to ensure proper care of the old parents and grandparents. Thus, the society of Elizabethan and Jacobean periods has not been entirely a different one from the present in regard to the consideration of the aged people and all the positive and negative associations with it. Modern critics have seen this particular approach of Shakespeare in various ways in the works of Shakespeare. Like many other critics, Harlord Brooks, in his introductory write up to the book, *Henry IV* by William Shakespeare edited by Helen Morris, praises Shakespeare saying: Yet Like all works of artistic genius, Shakespeare's can only be analysed so far. His drama and his poetry will always have about them something which into words no critics can digest. (Morris XI)

However, Harlord Bloom accepts the characters', Hal, Falstaff, and Hotspur, role in this play as this paper conducts and he adds: "in *Henry IV*, Part 1, Prince Hal is being educated for kingship and has a correct estimate of Honour, while Falstaff despises honour and Hotspur makes an idol of it". (Morris XI)

This has been the theme of investigation of this paper and as the paper is concerned to the gerontological aspects of criticism, the disregard of Falstaff and the appraisal of the youth like that of Hal and Hotspur by Shakespeare is the main conflict here. Besides, Shakespeare from the very start of the drama almost to the end of Part 2 puts emphasis on a particular quality of any character and that is age. Not only the personality but also the destiny seems to be depended on age. In this regard Potter says: "Everyone seems to be waiting for the death of the sick and ageing Henry IV and both Falstaff and the Lord Chief Justice described as old". (Potter 220)

To add to this Anne Bradby says that Falstaff is enriched with material diversity, immense flexibility, light heartedness and the capability of enjoyment which are supposed, as by Shakespeare, to be found in the young souls only. On the other hand, Falstaff, according to Anne, does not maintain the experience of old age and has no thought of morrow leading him to the fatal consequences of the life, he lives. If that is what Shakespeare thinks, there is no alternative way of calling him a xenophobic author who regards age to define the characteristics of a person. Anne adds:

The old greybeard utters only his most heartfelt conviction when on the occasion of robbery, whipping up his own courage with violent words, he roars at the frightened travelers, 'What ! ye knaves, young men must live(II.ii.1). (Bradby 134)

This shows, according to Shakespeare, that the world is for the young souls and the aged must stand still waiting for death repenting on the misdeeds done in past. This plainly cannot be the life of an aged man as from the gerontological point of view; he has the right to enjoy the world if he is capable of doing that. In a sense, there should not be any border line between an aged and a young in regard to the life the age man wants to live and the societal restrictions. Perhaps, which life an aged man should live, should be the choice of the aged man himself. But, Shakespeare chooses the societal life for the aged man and so he has not tried to go beyond and think over the societal norms and culture. Emily M. Sugerman in the PhD thesis on 'Of the Last Verses in the Book: Old Age, Caregiving, and Early Modern Literature' says that old people have always shown their expertise in exhibiting belief in the ability of unseen forces. Sugerman, even, calls the portrayal of the aged people in *Henry IV* as credulous and naïve. It is also suggested that the historical knowledge of older people is relegated to the arena of superstition. Talking about Falstaff, Sugerman says:

Instead, Falstaff embodies a newer, more self-directed type of aging that resembles Hal's self-interested and strategic behaviour. Falstaff's insistence on strategic aging, rather than chronological aging, mimics this focus on the power of the individual to shape his own fate, rather than the influence of the stars, the seasons, prophecy, or the expectations of others. (Sugerman 182-183)

In this situation, Shakespeare may not have the thought of thinking more than the mere representation of the particular society. But, being an author of unlimited possibilities, a man capable of zooming the human mind, soul and nature, Shakespeare's approach to age cannot be acceptable at all. Here, in his drama, Shakespeare does not become successful in overcoming the conservative attitude of society around him. Perhaps, it is also possible that due to the high prestige as an author in the latter part of his life, he has not shown the desire to lose his position by going against the society or audiences' expectations. Besides, Shakespeare allows Falstaff to be a masterpiece but not only withstands to give that character a place in the society but also brings a doom which to many critics seem a tragic one. Maurice Charney in his book claims that there is inconsistency in the portrayal of age by Shakespeare to save the theme and please the audience. Maurice admits: "It may seem disappointing that Shakespeare refuses to grapple with the ideological implications of old age". (Morris 165)

Furthermore, Janice Rossen points out: "The most important feature of an elderly character is that of memory-above all a recollection of particular people". (Rossen 220)

However, Bacon's view in regard to this type of characters like Falstaff is important as he seems to have the company of Shakespeare himself. In Francis Bacon, *Essays*, edited by W. Aldis Wright, Bacon says: "That is like the felicity of a player who, if he were left of his auditory and their applause, he would straight be out of heart and countenance: and therefore they [the Epicureans] call virtue bonum theatrale (emphasis added)". (Wright 249)

And, it is found in the plays of Shakespeare where aged people keep on passing wise comments out of the knowledge accumulated by age. This is one side of elderly life but the side followed by Falstaff here is not impossible or guilt. As Falstaff puts on the attire of youth on his aged fat body, Shakespeare makes the body been burned down by the heat of the dress and society. In this way, Critics find their own way to discuss about Shakespeare's being judgmental about age and aged people. Though there are various causes of Shakespeare's this judgmental behaviour but that is an unsatisfactory approach to the aged people again from a world celebrated writer, Shakespeare.

### 3. King Henry, a Prototype of Shakespeare's Ideal Aged Man

King Henry, in this drama, is set out more as of a worried father, guardian who is weak, feeble and a dying person than a King Henry IV. From the very onset of drama, the weariness of the king about his son is found consistently where he prefers Hotspur to be his son rather than the prince Harry in his wishes. And, so it is seen in his speech:

Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me sin  
In envy that my Lord Northumberland  
Should be the father to so blest a son,  
A son who is the theme of honour's tongue;  
Amongst a grove, the very straightest plant;

Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride:  
 Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,  
 See riot and dishonour stain the brow  
 Of my young Harry. (I.i.78-84, Part 1)

These lines delineate not only the frustration of the king as a father but also the main conflict of this play which is plainly between Prince Harry and Hotspur. Besides, *Henry IV*'s reference to the old folk superstitions about fairies, who may have changed the young children at birth, demonstrates that he has a desire to get a worthy and capable son to replace himself or at least to be by him when he is in problem. Interesting enough that Shakespeare amalgamates his attitude towards aged man with that of main conflict of the history. But, this speech also introduces the future ruler of England. Moreover, the King is so tormented about the future of his kingdom and the prince that makes him to be suspicious on his own blood. Here, on this he says:

I know not whether God will have it so,  
 For some displeasing service I have done,  
 That, in his secret doom, out of my blood  
 He'll breed revengement and a scourge for me;  
 But thou dost in thy passages of life  
 Make me believe that thou art only mark'd  
 For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven  
 To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,  
 Could such inordinate and low desires,  
 Such poor, such bare, such lewd, such mean attempts,  
 Such barren pleasures, rude society,  
 As thou art match'd withal and grafted to,  
 Accompany the greatness of thy blood  
 And hold their level with thy princely heart? (III.ii.36-50, Part 1)

The King, here, can accept neither the life, the prince is been living, nor what Hal has been doing and so he tries hard to bring him back as a worthy person of the palace from the rude place as because this prince is supposed to lead him and the whole kingdom. But, seeing the rioting and scandalous way of life the father, Henry IV, is pained and turns envious to Hotspur. Surprisingly, at right time the notorious prince chooses his supposedly path of following his father and attending the war has been a new foot step towards the life King desired for long. And, the duel, between the prince and Hotspur, is won by the Prince which brings light of hope to the darkness in the mind of the King that is been clouded by the lifestyle of the prince. Leaving a life of freedom and desire is never easy and so the prince once again goes back to the earlier life and this makes his father weary of his son and that is found in the speech:

How many thousand of my poorest subjects  
 Are at this hour asleep! O sleep, O gentle sleep,  
 Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,  
 That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down  
 And steep my senses in forgetfulness?  
 Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,  
 Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee  
 And hush'd with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,  
 Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,  
 Under the canopies of costly state,  
 And lull'd with sound of sweetest melody?  
 O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile  
 In loathsome beds, and leavest the kingly couch  
 A watch-case or a common 'larum-bell?  
 Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast  
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains  
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge  
 And in the visitation of the winds,  
 Who take the ruffian billows by the top,  
 Curling their monstrous heads and hanging them  
 With deafening clamour in the slippery clouds,  
 That, with the hurly, death itself awakes?  
 Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose  
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,  
 And in the calmest and most stillest night,  
 With all appliances and means to boot,  
 Deny it to a king? Then happy low, lie down!

Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown (III.i.4-32 .part 2)

The agony of a dying father for a shameful son breaks the heart of not only the audience but also everyone who can hear this and so he also cannot keep himself calm. Being helpless, weak, sick, aged and dying father he has nothing to do in this situation but to lie down. Being helpless, the king concludes that the people in powers are usually not happy and carefree as they have to live a hard life for the betterment of normal people. Though the king has said a critics acclaimed, universal idea of power which is still been quoted in regard to those men with big responsibilities. Here, Shakespeare means to present the idea of replacing someone young to be well capable to endure the hardship of Kingship. With the help of this wholesome a truth, Shakespeare tries to find an excuse and sympathy for the King's replacement. This statement is been a paradox to the life of the King himself as he is in the situation of the poor and simple man who is obsessed with the lecherous lifestyle of his son which pains him and so here he is not a king rather a father mostly. It is also worth noting that if he has not been a king, there may not have been a need of a good prince. But, this is not the case because even being a normal man, the king, would not have been happy of his life due to his rioting son. This is more a concern of a father than that of a King. And so he says with powers comes problems which is for a fact is a pregnant speech with a lot of criticism from various angels are pretty possible. Now, he, the King, is characterized as a man thinking of death which is confirmed by his speech:

Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds:

And he, the noble image of my youth,

Is overspread with them: therefore my grief

Stretches itself beyond the hour of death:

The blood weeps from my heart when I do shape

In forms imaginary the unguided days

And rotten times that you shall look upon

When I am sleeping with my ancestors.

For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,

When rage and hot blood are his counsellors,

When means and lavish manners meet together,

O, with what wings shall his affections fly

Towards fronting peril and opposed decay! (IV.iv, 55-66, part 2)

Surprisingly, the king is sick enough and awaiting death but he neither bows to anyone nor seeks for mercy which is a positive move by Shakespeare though. In fact, the King acts as an advisor to rest of his sons, saying:

Nothing but well to thee, Thomas of Clarence.

How chance thou art not with the prince thy brother?

He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, Thomas;

Thou hast a better place in his affection

Than all thy brothers: cherish it, my boy,

And noble offices thou mayst effect

Of mediation, after I am dead,

Between his greatness and thy other brethren:

Therefore omit him not; blunt not his love,

Nor lose the good advantage of his grace

By seeming cold or careless of his will;

For he is gracious, if he be observed:

He hath a tear for pity and a hand

Open as day for melting charity:

Yet notwithstanding, being incensed, he's flint,

As humorous as winter and as sudden

As flaws congealed in the spring of day.

His temper, therefore, must be well observed:

Chide him for faults, and do it reverently,

When thou perceive his blood inclined to mirth;

But, being moody, give him line and scope,

Till that his passions, like a whale on ground,

Confound themselves with working. Learn this, Thomas,

And thou shalt prove a shelter to thy friends,

A hoop of gold to bind thy brothers in,

That the united vessel of their blood,

Mingled with venom of suggestion--

As, force perforce, the age will pour it in--

Shall never leak, though it do work as strong

As aconitum or rash gunpowder. (IV.iv, 19-47, part 2)

This speech seems more of a speech of a man who is dying and worried about the property he is going to leave for his sons and so the king, here, gives direction to his other two sons, Thomas and Clarence, not to reject Prince Hal from what he deserves. He, again, gives them advice on how to rule and make allies for the sake of the Kingdom. He says this to avoid any collision among his sons about the kingship. At that time, almost at the end he finally gets what he has longed for so long as it is been informed by Warwick that there is tear of love and respect in the eyes of Prince Harry and it is been said in this way:

My lord, I found the prince in the next room,  
 Washing with kindly tears his gentle cheeks,  
 With such a deep demeanor in great sorrow  
 That tyranny, which never quaff'd but blood,  
 Would, by beholding him, have wash'd his knife  
 With gentle eye-drops. He is coming hither. (IV.v, 212-217, part 2)  
 Being greatly satisfied, the king puts on like this;  
 Be happy, he will trouble you no more;  
 England shall double gild his treble guilt,  
 England shall give him office, honour, might;  
 For the fifth Harry from curb'd licence plucks  
 The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog  
 Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent. (IV.v, 257-262, part 2)

Thus, despite, the king, being a historical character with remarkable monologues and sight of seeing the world, after all is been depicted in this drama as an aged father burdened with both kingship and unworthy son.

#### 4. Tragedy of a Rebellious Aged Man

Sir John Falstaff is one of the most loved characters, made by Shakespeare, though this loved character, unfortunately enough, turns out to be a loathed villain and dies with dishonor due to the way Shakespeare has presented him in *Henry IV* (Part 1 and 2) which may have originated from the desire of Shakespeare to make his drama societal and palatable. At start, Sir John Falstaff appears to be close and very intimate with Prince Hal. But, as a character, Falstaff, despite being aged, rebels against the social norms and enjoys such a life that makes him a thief, highwayman and mooch to others. In a sense, he is been shown as a man with a lot of negative qualities like old, fat bodied, selfish, dishonest, corrupt, manipulative, boastful, and lecherous. Despite all of these oddities, Falstaff is one of the most important figures in *Henry IV*. Plainly, he lives a life of desire and pleasure securing him a position in this drama where he hankers after pleasurism. His thought on honor is like:

Well, 'tis no matter; honour pricks  
 me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I  
 come on? how then? Can honour set to a leg? no: or  
 an arm? no: or take away the grief of a wound? no.  
 Honour hath no skill in surgery, then? no. What is  
 honour? a word. What is in that word honour? what  
 is that honour? air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it?  
 he that died o' Wednesday. Doth he feel it? no.  
 Doth he hear it? no. 'Tis insensible, then. Yea,  
 to the dead. But will it not live with the living?  
 no. Why? detraction will not suffer it. Therefore  
 I'll none of it. Honour is a mere scutcheon: and so  
 ends my catechism. (V.i.122–133, Part 1)

By his words it can be understood that honor is quite an abstract idea for Falstaff which has no relevance to practical matters and on life. Most interestingly, though Falstaff mocks and challenges honor in his every action, he is intimately been connected throughout the play by Shakespeare, himself. Moreover, he is been presented in such a comic way that he mocks by lying even at climax scene of the drama. When prince Hal meets Falstaff, Falstaff claims to kill Hotspur by himself. About this fraudulent Falstaff, A.C. Bradley in his essay 'The Rejection of Falstaff' says: "...the immortal Falstaff, a character almost pure humorous, and therefore no subject for moral judgment". (Hunter 67)

Falstaff has been ludicrous because of his being a man with huge fat belly, corresponding appetite, too much wit, and a lecherous life. About the happiness Falstaff gives, Bradley argues: "Happy is too weak a word; he is in bliss, and we share his glory". (Hunter 68)

In a sense, this bliss of being free of societal norms gains him the power to bring humour before all. and, this is what Falstaff does continuously without looking at society and its norm and all the time challenging the world around him sometimes by words and sometimes by actions, The uniqueness of this character is to be found nowhere in Shakespeare's plays as Shakespeare, himself, has degraded him in the eye of others and also by bringing a catastrophe in his life. It is of no doubt that there has been more than mere close relationship between Falstaff and Hal. But, there is a stage of drama when he suffers on the heat of life in so bad a manner that brings sadness to at least of present audience. And, there is none to lift him

up when he falls down to the depth of reality of life and he also finds no levers at his hand. Why Shakespeare takes this particular character to this position is a million dollar question, as Shakespeare may have been the only one to answer this. This question again arises when Prince Hal as King Henry V rejects him just after the accession of throne. There is a scene in the second part of the drama which like the thunder and roaring of Gods not only breaks the heart of Falstaff but also vanishes the very existence of the character from the drama. In Scene V, Act V of the second part of *Henry IV*, Shakespeare presents:

FALSTAFF

God save thy grace, King Hal! my royal Hal!

PISTOL

The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal imp of fame!

FALSTAFF

God save thee, my sweet boy!

KING HENRY V

My lord chief-justice, speak to that vain man.

Lord Chief-Justice Have you your wits? know you what 'tis to speak?

FALSTAFF

My king! my Jove! I speak to thee, my heart!

KING HENRY V

I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers;

How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!

I have long dream'd of such a kind of man,

So surfeit-swell'd, so old and so profane;

But, being awaked, I do despise my dream.

Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;

Leave gormandizing; know the grave doth gape

For thee thrice wider than for other men.

Reply not to me with a fool-born jest:

Presume not that I am the thing I was;

For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,

That I have turn'd away my former self;

So will I those that kept me company.

When thou dost hear I am as I have been,

Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,

The tutor and the feeder of my riots:

Till then, I banish thee, on pain of death,

As I have done the rest of my misleaders,

Not to come near our person by ten mile.

For competence of life I will allow you,

That lack of means enforce you not to evil:

And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,

We will, according to your strengths and qualities,

Give you advancement. Be it your charge, my lord,

To see perform'd the tenor of our word. Set on. (V.v, 37-68, Part 2)

The royal procession passes out but Falstaff and his company remain. This particular incident can be nothing but the disapproval of the very existence of an aged man with rioting and lecherous life. Despite being disapproved Falstaff shows no resentment in the hope of two things that comfort him. First, he finds Shallow's thousand pound and then he desires the possibility of being called back privately by the new king. But, even these sparks of light deem off, as the chief justice accompanied by prince John give orders:

Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the Fleet:

Take all his company along with him. (V.v, 84-85, part 2)

At this point, Falstaff breaks out saying 'My Lord, my Lord' (V.v. part 2) but he is taken away and shortly after that scene the play ends with an epilogue where a dancer confirms Falstaff's no position in the kingdom of King Henry IV left alone in heart. What feelings have been at this very moment of the audience of that particular time cannot be found but right now it seems injustice. If prince Hal and the audience have keenly enjoyed the presence of Falstaff and sucked the antidote out of him to face the melancholy of life, how Falstaff can be rejected in that manner when Falstaff's good days perhaps take him to a societal life and a good end of his life. This sadness deepens when it is heard in Henry V that Falstaff dies immediately after being taken away. It looks as if none was owed to him. Yes, he has been on the other side of civilized, societal life but this is not a thing of punishment. Significantly, Prince Harry has been in debt to him and it is been found in part one Scene III, Act III where prince Hal says:

Sirrah, do I owe you a thousand pound? (120)

And, in reply Falstaff rightly says;  
 A thousand pound, Hal? A million.  
 Thy love is worth a million; thou owest me thy love. (121-122)  
 About this rejection, Bradley says:

I will venture to put aside without the discussion the idea that he[Shakespeare] meant us throughout the two plays to regard Falstaff with disgust and indignation, so that we naturally feel nothing but pleasure at his fall... (Hunter 70)

The dismissal and the death afterward are actions taken by Shakespeare not only to bring a catastrophe to the life led by and aged man, Falstaff, but also shown as punishment by society and its institutions. On the other hand living the same life of disrespect, a youth gets the opportunity to change and being changed that very youth is awarded with a crown. Moreover, he is constantly been considered as old and so he is been punished bitterly for living a shameful life where as Prince Hal gets an opportunity to change himself and gets the supreme prestige although he also has been an important part of Falstaff's lifestyle. In Shakespeare's Pathos, Pyre says:

Towards old age, which, in an opposite way to childhood, walks near the gates of life, Shakespeare is less uniformly tender. He is no less disposed to laugh than weep over the fatuity of years that bring the philosophizing mind, but no true grasp of life... (Pyre 83)

It is quite plain that the life enjoyed by both Hal and Falstaff has been a kind of arrangement which is predestined by Shakespeare to show the others that this kind of lifestyle destroys if that is been carried away by an aged man while the young get opportunity to reshape and be awarded. Again, chief Justice's return and the act of sending Falstaff to prison out of Chief's private vengeance could have been stopped by the new King but that does not happen as it is the author of drama who wants to end it up like this. Grievously, Shakespeare goes further to kill the aged villain whereas at present even the most vicious prisoner does not get the death punishment in many countries. All these happen to Falstaff may be because of age where the young get the opportunity to resolve themselves. According to Shakespeare, a young boy can do whatever he desires with his life but if he stands right at the right moment of life, the rioting life of that young man is acceptable but if it happens with an aged one there is no escape from punishment. Besides, a young has the liberty to live a life of his desire but the aged do not because this is not approved by society. Even at the end, Hal has been a person of love where Henry V sees as he is supposed to be seen keeping the social norms and its culture in mind which certainly allow little space for an aged man like Falstaff in the society let alone in heart.

## 5. Shakespeare's Purposes behind the Violation of History

Henry Percy, surnamed as Hotspur, is a presentation of youth's passion and courage especially to be used, by Shakespeare, with a few purposes indeed. Hotspur is been depicted with much passion in his head, by Shakespeare, which is better understood in the scene with his wife, where, after his wife's close of noble strain of womanly eloquence, he not only calls in servants to inquiry about his horses and orders but also imagined a battle. Here, his wife's tender remonstrance and elegance cannot bring his passion for war and kingship out of his mind. This is plain that his rapidity and skittishness of mind win over him as if he had no control over his mind and brain. Perhaps, Hotspur, is so preoccupied with the fire of youth that he, even though loves his wife, gets her neglected. Besides, Hotspur is too much impatient to be victorious. But, he has made no war scheme to have a win in the coming battle. However, he can be a good soldier for border to win a battle there as that can be won by fury but for a planned battle before kingdom, one must have a scheme or plan and also has to understand the opponent. Furthermore, Hotspur does not do the homework as he has been very headstrong, preemptory and confident even to his rashness which renders him quite out of the war even before the real battle to take place. In this way, his dangers thicken when his friends fall, allies go back and thus his brave spirit makes his very disadvantage. This, as sewn by Shakespeare, can only be the characteristics of an immature and to be immature he needs to be young. In order to ensure the youth, Shakespeare in this historical drama presents Hotspur of the same age of Prince Harry though in real the historical Henry Percy has been twenty three years older. And about this historical play, Pyre also argues:

In the historical plays, the subject matter, since times succeed to times, naturally led to numerous portraits of men past their powers: "Old John of Gaunt" and York in Richard II, Gloucester in Henry VI, and, for the women, the Duchess of York in Richard III and the Duchess of Gloucester in Richard II are early examples of old age full of sorrows and bitter memories. (Pyre 83)

However, ignoring the facts of a historical play, to present Hotspur as immature and passionate, perhaps Shakespeare thinks that Hotspur is needed to be younger as the aged one does not have the opportunity to do so. It means that, Shakespeare may not have the desire to see an aged man a symbol of passion, courage and misunderstanding of self and others. It is because of that, being dogmatic to age, Shakespeare does not feel that an aged person to fight with young prince. But, it is also to be understood from the very approach of Shakespeare that aged people are meant to be in fatherland like that of the Forest of Arden as in *As You Like It* where the aged should mourn on the past and wait for death looking at their crippled and weak body. Again, this change of history is also done to bring someone of the same age of Hal to stand opposite to him which can vividly show the differences between the lifestyle and very characterization of both the characters. Being of same age Hotspur is consistently been compared with Hal. At the beginning of the play, King Henry contrasts his son with Northumberland's noble son, Hotspur, saying:



Yea, there thou makest me sad, and mak'st me sin  
 In envy that my Lord Northumberland  
 Should be the father to so blest a son –  
 A son who is the theme of honour's tongue,  
 Amongst a grove the very straightest plant,  
 Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride –  
 Whilst I by looking on the praise of him  
 See riot and dishonour stain the brow  
 Of my young Harry. (1.i.77-85, Part 1)

Besides, the common name of the two sons is taken forward by the King Henry IV. After the contrast shown in the speech, Shakespeare surprisingly continues the duality and contrast in the arrangement of the plots of this drama. This arrangement of the plots according to this contrast can be seen in the following table.

**Table 1: Appearances of Hal and Hotspur in Henry IV Part 1**

Scene and Act	Appearance		Talked about
1.1			Hal and Hotspur
1.2	Hal		
1.3		Hotspur	Hal
2.1			
2.2	Hal		Hotspur
2.3		Hotspur	
2.4	Hal		
3.1		Hotspur	
3.2	Hal		Hal and Hotspur
3.3	Hal		
4.1		Hotspur	Hal
4.2	Hal		
4.3		Hotspur	
4.4			Hal and Hotspur
5.1	Hal		Hal and Hotspur
5.2		Hotspur	Hal
5.3	Hal	Hotspur	
5.4	Hal	Hotspur	
5.5	Hal		

Moreover, Shakespeare goes on to create an apprehension for the final battle by provoking the audience and letting them guess the similarities and dissimilarities between these two characters. As shown in the table, both the characters face the same situation in III.i, IV.i and in V.ii. Here, these two have been seen talking about one another. While in I.iii, Hotspur makes promise to gain 'that same sword-and-buckler'. And, in II.iv, Hal announces:

I am not yet of Percy's mind,  
 The Hotspur of the North – he that kills me some six  
 Or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands,  
 And says to his wife, 'Fie upon this quiet life! I want work.'  
 'O my sweet Harry,' says she, 'how many hast thou killed today?'  
 'Give my roan horse a drench,' says  
 He, and answers, 'Some fourteen,' an hour after;  
 'a trifle, a trifle' (2.4.102-109, Part 1).

This is how Hotspur is been used by Shakespeare as a foil to highlight the contrast of a worthy prince and Hal in company with Falstaff and others. The portrayal of the character, Hotspur, is been done with not only the purpose of not letting any aged man to take a personality of passion and courage which are signified as something for youth but also with the objective of creating a foil figure so that comparing the rioting life of Hal becomes easy for the audience. Thus Shakespeare turns out to be leaning towards the young like an ageist even if it needed to alter the past which shows him as a xenophobic author with the idea that aged can neither be passionate, immature nor can be capable enough to compare with the young.

## 6. Youth and its colour as seen by Shakespeare

Prince of Wales, the future Henry V, is the representation of youth who changes according to the demand of certain stages of life. Talking about the youth and its colour can mean something that does not care, worry, remorse, stand still and follow

the dream of life with whole heart. Besides, youth does not mean living a life of pleasure and sucking the honey out of life which at last ends the life itself. However, Prince Hal has been enjoying the life in a way that is not supposed to be of pleasuring. Even at the cost of his princely status, he continues his rioting life like a Streetman. Hal, at the first stage of drama, drinks mouthful and lives in an apartment accompanied by lecherous Falstaff and his company. Shamelessly, Hal goes on to rob with Falstaff and robs Falstaff indeed to make a ridicule of him. Moreover, he has always been pursuing youthful pleasures. In a sense he has enjoyed the chimes of midnight too. In this way, he has ambled up and down with shallow gestures, rush behaviour and outnimbled wits. This is how he has constantly been living an un-princely life with some fools and people of those backgrounds who are not welcome to any civil society. He, however, has been the companion of the prurient streets of the kingdom. The vile participation by Prince Hal has made him a weary of the sight of common people. Because of ill and carnal way of his life style, as shown by Shakespeare at the Part 1, he is seen to find a different meaning of youth's life and its pleasure. Despite his salacious life, he has been a part of; he has had the power to overcome self and taking the place of a real king. And, this zeal he has been keeping from the very early stage of drama as Hal's speech in Act I, Scene I (Part 1) is a very proof of this:

I know you all, and will awhile uphold  
The unyoked humour of your idleness:  
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,  
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds  
To smother up his beauty from the world,  
That, when he please again to be himself,  
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at.  
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists  
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him" (173-181, Part 1)

Here, he gives a glimpse of the future life he wants to have where he compares himself with the Sun and hopes to overdo the cloud and dirt on him by the heat of his pure heart and be someone who will be followed and honored. In addition to that, he, talking to his father, assures that

I shall hereafter, my thrice gracious lord,  
Be more myself. (III.ii, 61-62)

Eventually, he, like a real prince takes the war seriously and wins a battle with Hotspur which is more of a surprise by Shakespeare. A young lives a lecherous life and sudden being inspired by his father's speech, he comes as victorious against a passionate and furious warrior like Hotspur. Things are not as easy as shown here by Shakespeare even for Gods or Deities. Again after the battle, Hal goes to his rioting life again to enjoy the freedom of life. He, also, shamelessly seen listening to get eavesdropped when Falstaff and his whore have been making love and talking about prince Hal. At that time he realizes;

By heaven, Poins, I feel me much to blame  
So idly to profane the precious time  
When tempest of commotion, like the south  
Borne with black vapour, doth begin to melt  
And drop upon our bare unarmèd heads.—  
Give me my sword and cloak.—Falstaff, good night (II.v. 306-310, part 1)

And, then he changes himself from a low down prince to chaste and hard hearted king quite like the same manner he turned out to be a hero in the battle, so easy one indeed. After his father's death, he attains the throne which changes him altogether. Forgetting his past, Henry V not only rejects his earlier company from his heart but also throws them to the dungeon of pain. This is how the protagonist in *Henry IV*, turns to a societal King from a lecherous youth. Here, Shakespeare not only plays with the age of protagonist but also uses that to make this particular character to ensure heroism. It is well known to anybody that flexibility of youth can endure anything but whether his hero has been that kind of flexible where he can jump from nadir to zenith without any problem is a question to ask. According to Shakespeare, it seems that because of age, Hal has been successful enough to change. If this is not be true then what logics can there be against Falstaff's changing his lifestyle after his soul mate, Prince Hal. Again, it is a as usual approach of Shakespeare to get accustomed with that he sees age as very important criteria of a personality as he may have faith on the fact that age makes personalities. And, that is why he allows prince Hal to suck the pleasure out of his licentious lifestyle and make him king when history wants him to be.

## 7. Age in the other works of Shakespeare

Shakespeare in his works convey the impression to be preoccupied with the issues of as this has an acute relation to his own sense of growing old which makes him portray the aged character in such a way that conforms the social norms and culture. Beside, many aged characters are portrayed as fool, heavy father, neglected wise, states man. Being obsessed with the ravages of time, Shakespeare presents his characters as reverting to second childishness, like King Lear, or, senility like Polonius. Though Shakespeare has given wisdom to some of his aged characters, like Jaques, as a result of his experience accumulated, they have been scorned a lot. In this regard, Falstaff is an example of a n aged rebel who tries to continue the illusions of youth in *Henry IV*. Characters like Duke Senior, Old Adam in *As You Like It* have an access to pastoral ideal of golden age. Moreover, Jaques' *Seven Ages of Man*' is a masterpiece of speech which plainly clarifies the standard, societal

way of defining life cycle. According to Shakespeare, Old age characteristics are devoid of any teeth, eye sight, taste and unlimited wait for death. This very theme of ages of man can be found in the song that Feste sings at the end of Twelfth Night:

When that I was and a little tine boy  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
A foolish thing was but a toy [trifle]  
For the rain it raineth everyday (V.i. 391-94)

Here, the wind and rain mean the unavoidable journey of time, especially as in the act of a destroyer. The last but one stanza of Feste's song summons a mournful old age which is quite similar to that of Jaques in *As You Like It*:

But when I came unto my beds,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,  
With tosspots still had drunken heads,  
For the rain it raineth everyday. (V.i. 403-406)

Here, drunkenness is a symbol of sadness as the clown awaits death. Interestingly, Feste's song from Twelfth Night is been adapted by the fool in *King Lear* which is uttered when the king enters the hovel with blasted heath:

He that has a little tine wit,  
With heigh-ho, the wind and the rain,  
Must make content with his fortunes fit,  
Though the rain it raineth everyday. (III.ii.74-77)

Here again, the same wind and rain represent the catastrophes of time which seems to wear down everything. However, the aged characters are the victim of wind and rain in Shakespeare's plays. Besides, Shakespeare has been a product of the society where the average age for the man has been forty and so out of that he shows Cleopatra old enough as she has been nearing the end of childbearing year. Again in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Benedick hearing Beatrice's desire for him says;

A man loves the meat  
in his youth that he cannot endure in his age.  
Much Ado About Nothing (2.3.223-4)

The same intension of Shakespeare continues and can be found in the speech Dogberry also;  
As they say,  
when the age is in, the wit is out.  
Much Ado About Nothing (3.5.31-2)

The theme of seeing aged ones as burden can also be found in *Julius Caesar* when in reply to Cinna, Metellus overviews age:

His silver hairs  
Will purchase us a good opinion  
And buy men's voices to commend our deeds:  
It shall be said his judgment rul'd our hands;  
Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear,  
But all be buried in his gravity.  
Julius Caesar (2.1.158-3)

Same is thought of age in *Richard II* where John of Gaunt gives an answer to the King Richard in a way;  
But not a minute, king, that thou canst give:  
Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,  
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;  
Thou canst help time to furrow me with age.  
But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage;  
Thy word is current with him for my death,  
But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.  
Richard II (1.3.230-6)

The adjectives that should ornament the old age are honor, obedience, and friends to company which is said by Macbeth in his soliloquy:

I have liv'd long enough: my way of life  
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old age,  
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,  
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.  
Macbeth (5.3.30-6)

However this particular idea is also found in the poems of Shakespeare. In 'Sonnet ii', Shakespeare surprises by the opening of the quatrain where he astonishingly finds both the poet and his love are of middle age:

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,  
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,  
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,  
Will be a tottered weed of small world held.

In addition to that, 'Sonnet LXXIII' is also a poem which focuses on the old age and its circumstances;

That time of year thou mayst in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.  
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day  
As after sunset fadeth in the west;  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,  
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,  
As the death-bed whereon it must expire  
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.  
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,  
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

However, Shakespeare does not clarify the specific age of his characters rather he brings them to light by the qualities of physic. In this regard women characters have been portrayed in a bit different manner, as it is closely connected with the onset of menopause. Whenever a woman passes the capability of child bearing power, it is called by Shakespeare and his society too. In spite of Shakespeare's conflicting, contrastative ideas, he has surprised Hamlet, the Prince, with his mother's erotic strong desire. In Hamlet's words:

...for at your age  
The heyday in the blood is tame, its humble,  
And waits upon the judgment. (Hamlet, III.iv. 69-71)

Thus, in the works of Shakespeare, there is a humiliation of the idea of age in such a way that makes himself a character of the world theatre playing the role of author engaged in the thought of norms, culture of society and of his own position.

## 8. Conclusion

In Shakespeare's works it has been seen that Shakespeare is wrapped with social norms and customs in regard to age. Despite, being a man of unlimited ideas and view, he cannot tear up cover he is wrapped with and this is what comes out brightly here in the drama, *Henry IV* (both parts). In most of his plays, aged people are presented as heavy fathers, wise old man, jealous old man, old and tired warrior or statesman. But, Ageing is a natural journey of life which is certain to everyone. Nevertheless, the term, old, is not applicable to every human being in a same manner. What age and qualities can confirm the term, old, as it is an uncertain one. The Answer is not a fixed one rather a variable one as it is seen that a man of sixty may not have white hair, while a young boy can have not only white hair but also wrinkled skin because of genetical reason. All the characteristics of calling a person old are plainly not obvious to all aged man or man over a certain age rather it is more of a social definition depending on their culture and norms. But, this may not seem to be a considerable fact to a gifted author like Shakespeare in regard to this drama also. He barely conceives Falstaff a man of spirit as he is a kind of fat, pleasure loving, rioting, lecherous human being. Moreover, he is constantly been considered as old and so he is been punished bitterly for living a shameful life where as Prince Hal gets an opportunity to change himself and gets the supreme prestige although he also has been an important part of Falstaff's lifestyle. However, Shakespeare's this very approach towards age is found not only in *Henry IV*, but also there are numerous examples of solitary and garrulous age, in his plays and poems, who are totally unconnected with their motivation but been introduced for picturesque or choric effect which detach and wander his characters of the fragments of humanity which move across the scenes and shake the feeble heads. Thus, Shakespeare turns out to be dogmatic once again in *Henry IV* (Parts 1 and 2) about his idea of aged man confirming the expected approach of Shakespeare and the very objectives of this paper which can help the present reader to have a way of looking at the works of Shakespeare in regard to age and history being adapted here for the mere significance of the plot. Except a few historical names, everything presented here in this drama is justified by the Shakespeare's own way of looking the society and world after all.

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